

20

A REMINISCENCE OF AND A PROMISE TO PROFESSOR  
JAMES HERVEY HYSLOP, Ph. D.

BY

S. ADOLPHUS KNOFF

With prefaces by

REV. WILLIAM L. SULLIVAN, D. D.,

MR. LAWSON PURDY, LL. D.,

and

PROFESSOR CHARLES S. DANA, M. D.

*New York*

---

\*A revised and reprinted tribute which was published in the *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research*, Section B, of the American Institute for Scientific Research, October and November, 1920; combined with an address delivered at the Memorial Service in honor of Dr. Hyslop at All Souls' Unitarian Church, January 17, 1921.



## ERRATA AND ADDENDA:

On the outside cover, instead of Professor Charles S. Dana, M. D., it should read Professor Charles L. Dana, M. D.

After relating the conversation of Carl Schurz with the spirit of Abraham Lincoln and the reference thereto in the *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research*, the following should have been inserted on page 9:

"It may not be generally known that President Lincoln himself was a firm believer in spiritualism and that during his administration he frequently consulted a certain medium (Miss Netti Colburn), particularly preceding important cabinet meetings. There can be found in the Congressional Library in Washington an interesting volume entitled "Was Abraham Lincoln a Spiritualist?" by Nettie Colburn Maynard, of White Plains, N. Y., and published by Rufus C. Hartranft, Philadelphia, 1891, in which most remarkable spiritualistic seances that took place in President Lincoln's presence are described. At one of these seances the topic was Lincoln's forthcoming emancipation proclamation. Through the control (a young girl with little understanding of the political situation being the medium), "Lincoln was charged with utmost solemnity and force of manner not to abate the terms of its issue. He was urged not to delay its enforcement as a law beyond the opening of the year; and he was assured that it was to be the crowning event of his administration and his life; and that while he was being counselled by strong parties to defer the enforcement of it, hoping to supplant it by other measures and to delay action, he must in no wise heed such counsel, but stand firm to his convictions and fearlessly perform the work and fulfil the mission for which he had been raised up by an overruling Providence."

The book describes the scene which took place in one of the parlors of the White House in the following words: "Those present declared that they lost sight of the timid girl in the majesty of the utterance, the strength and force of the language, and the importance of that which was conveyed, and seemed to realize that some strong masculine spirit force was giving speech to almost divine commands."

When leaving the room the President turned to the medium and said: "My child, you possess a very singular gift; but that it is of God, I have no doubt. I thank you for coming here to-night. It is more important than perhaps any one present can understand."

On page 15, after discussing the belief in the individual immortality of the soul and the belief in the divine in man, should have been inserted the following:

Professor John D. Quackenbos, M. D., one of the best known authorities on therapeutic hypnotism, in his book "Body and Spirit," published by Harper and Brothers, devotes an entire chapter to the psychological evidence of immortality, and summarizes by saying: "All this but shows immortality to be an apprehension of the human reason, which age after age has avowed its conviction of the deathlessness of the soul and the unity of God."





## INTRODUCTION

REV. WILLIAM L. SULLIVAN, D. D.

Minister of All Souls' Unitarian Church, New York City

Dr. Knopf has written here a tribute to his friend, James Hervey Hyslop, and an outspoken confession of his belief in the scientific validity of the mighty conclusion which Dr. Hyslop spent the better years of his life in maintaining. Dr. Knopf's high praise of James Hyslop will be disputed by no one who knew the man. In integrity of character, Dr. Hyslop was not merely beyond reproach—he was beyond suspicion. In scientific habit he had been drilled and disciplined by life-long study of the philosophical sciences. No man was naturally more skeptical than he; no man had a more severe judgment for evidence; none was more patient in the painstaking search that brings evidence to light. It is any man's right to draw from that evidence inferences different from Dr. Hyslop's. He would have been the first to acknowledge this. But it is the just due of a noble-hearted man and carefully-trained scholar to say what Dr. Knopf says of him here, that he was of conspicuously high character and that he gave himself with splendid unselfishness to the pursuit of Truth.

In the second portion of this paper, Dr. Knopf takes his stand with many other eminent men trained in the experimental sciences, and declares himself convinced by the evidence for the soul's survival of death, and its occasional communication from the other shore with those still in the flesh. Without passing judgment on the correctness of this belief, any fair and competent man must, I am sure, say these two things about it: first, there is so much evidence accumulated in support of it that at least the mind that holds it can no longer be called precipitate or careless; and in the second place, one must acknowledge the fine courage that moves Dr. Knopf thus to assert that the facts have convinced him. We still live under the constraint of fetishes, catch-words, and the conventionalities of castes and professions. Entire mental courage in this world is rare, and it is as rare in the religious and academic world as anywhere else. Many, if not most, of the great forward steps in religion and science have been taken in defiance of pontiffs and pundits, whose business it seems to be to be shocked that anyone should question their infallibility, or should break open to fresh light the tight little compartments in which they have locked up all knowledge and the whole universe. I repeat, it requires courage and conscience for Dr. Knopf to announce this conviction of his, and he has my admiration for it.

But Dr. Knopf has no wish to thrust his conviction upon anybody. He asks, in the truest spirit of science, simply that inquirers lay aside disdain and study evidence. That is all. Some who study it will reach

another conclusion from his, and this is inevitable and wholesome in the experimental stage of every hypothesis. His faith, indeed, is that as evidence grows and as other explanations more and more fail to explain it, our survival of death and the occasional communication of the dead with the mortal living, will take their place among the denominations of science. But first of all, and here and now, Dr. Knopf asks us to study facts and to seek an interpretation that will fit them. It is the appeal of a scientific man to the scientific mind, and I rejoice to think that many will hear and heed it.

## PREFACE

By LAWSON PURDY, LL. D., New York

Dr. S. Adolphus Knopf has rendered a great service in giving the testimony of an experienced man of science to the value of the work carried on so long and so unselfishly by John Hervey Hyslop.

My early training and experience of life have been such that I do not feel the need of the kind of evidence for the survival of personality that is demanded by so many in these days, who require the kind of certitude that comes to them from the demonstrations of physical science. Dr. Hyslop's own experience led him to apply to the problems within the field of psychical research the same methods that are applied in the field of the physical sciences. His primary purpose was to demonstrate, if it were true, the continuity of consciousness or, as it is sometimes described, the survival of personality. He seemed to me little interested in alleged reports of conditions that surround departed spirits because he could not prove the truth of such reports. Sometimes the things that interested him most seemed to many of trivial importance because they had not concentrated their attention on the same subject that concerned Dr. Hyslop, namely, proof of the survival of personality. What matters it what some alleged dead person thinks concerning the future life if we do not know that this person is dead and truthful.

It is peculiarly appropriate that physicians should concern themselves with these problems, for Dr. Hyslop went far enough to prove that he could benefit greatly those who are living through his knowledge of the means of communicating with those who are dead. The physician cannot afford to overlook any conceivable means that may be offered for the cure of disease whether it be of the body or that more intangible thing that we call mind.

No one can appeal so well to members of scientific professions as one who himself has rendered long service in the most honored of those professions.

Letter from Charles L. Dana, M. D., Professor of Nervous Diseases, Cornell University Medical College:

New York, February 25, 1921.

S. Adolphus Knopf, M. D.,  
16 West 95th St.,  
New York City.

Dear Dr. Knopf:

I have your letter and have read your tribute to Dr. Hyslop with very much interest. I think you show courage and I know you have sincerity in expressing your opinions regarding psychism and the life beyond.



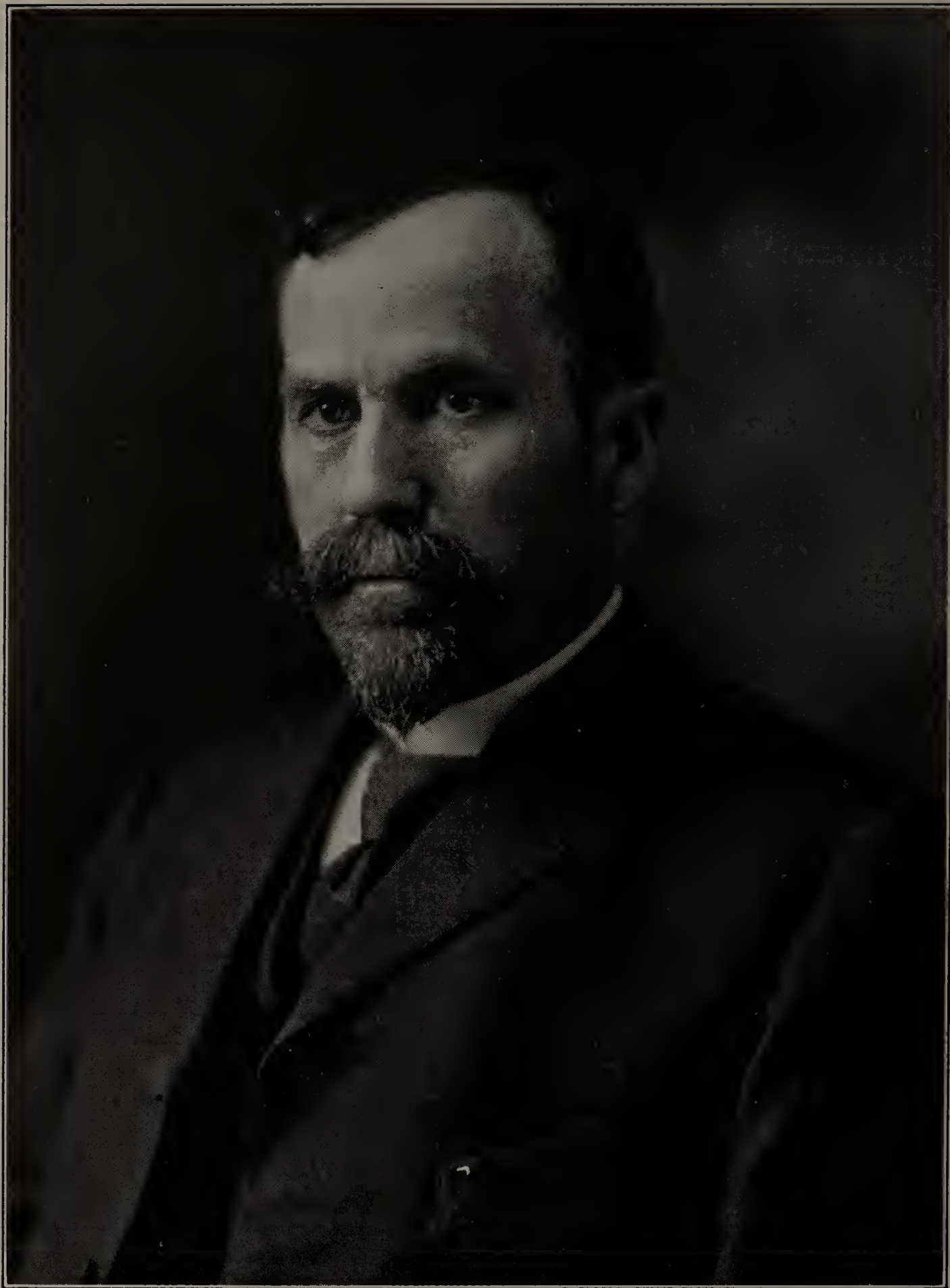
I think that I should say, with Dr. Purdy, that my early training and experience of life are such that I do not feel the need of this new kind of evidence of survival. However, I have always been interested in Dr. Hyslop's researches, and have been a consistent reader of his contributions, particularly of his reviews.

Without passing judgment on the question of whether he proved his views, I have felt sympathy with his studies of the problem because it seems to me there will always be disputes and investigations and controversies until the truth is actually established, and we never establish a truth by sitting back and saying that it is not so. I think, too, that Dr. Hyslop's work has furnished a very considerable contribution to our knowledge of psychology and especially of automatic and subconscious activities. This knowledge can be absorbed by those working in academic laboratories without accepting all the conclusions drawn by Dr. Hyslop and his followers.

Very sincerely yours,  
CHAS. L. DANA.







James H. Hylton

## A REMINISCENCE OF AND A PROMISE TO PROFESSOR JAMES HERVEY HYSLOP, Ph. D.\*

BY S. ADOLPHUS KNOPF, M. D.

Dr. James Hervey Hyslop was known to me through his writings when he was still Professor of Psychology at Columbia and long before he entered upon his investigations of so-called spiritual phenomena. I had the honor of meeting him personally for the first time some ten years ago at a dinner of the Unitarian Club. His personality impressed me at once. A pale, thoughtful face, a dark, full beard worn nowadays but by few men, a high forehead, and quiet but penetrating eyes, gave him a striking appearance. He was the guest of honor of the Club, and his after-dinner address consisted of a comprehensive view of the labors of the American Society of Psychical Research. What impressed me most in the man was his earnestness and the thoroughly scientific attitude he assumed in dealing with the most difficult problems which have confronted mankind in all ages. His frank condemnation of all that appeared to him fraudulent, his suspension of judgment in cases of doubt, and his candid acceptance of what seemed to him and many others irrefutable evidence of the possibility that discarnated spirits may communicate intelligently with human beings, won for him the sympathy of his audience, believers and unbelievers alike.

I had the privilege of a few minutes' conversation with him after the dinner, and the result of my meeting him that evening was that I became an associate member of the A. S. P. R., receiving the *Journal of Psychical Research*, of which he was the editor. I met Dr. Hyslop a number of times after that, but never had an opportunity for a lengthy conversation until last summer when I saw him at his summer home in the Adirondacks. He was then suffering physically, but his mind was as clear and alert as ever. We spoke of the awakening of an intense interest in psychic phenomena as a result of the war and the sudden passing away of millions of souls, and the yearning of those left behind for some sign that their loved ones, who had made the supreme sacrifice, still lived. After this we discussed some of the older and some of the more recent books dealing with various phenomena bearing on the subject of the future life, of the genuineness of all of which he was not convinced.

---

\*A revised and reprinted tribute which was published in the *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research*, Section B, of the American Institute for Scientific Research, October and November, 1920; combined with an address delivered at the Memorial Service in honor of Dr. Hyslop at All Souls' Unitarian Church, January 17, 1921.



I was surprised that he did not recall Carl Schurz's remarkable psychical experiences after the Civil War, related in his reminiscences, published some ten years ago (Vol. III, pp. 152-156). For the student in psychical phenomena these experiences give perhaps some of the best documentary evidence of intelligent communications from the spirit world yet recorded. I endeavored to relate to Dr. Hyslop as much as I could recall of these experiences, but to be accurate, I will here copy the exact occurrences as they are related in Schurz's memoirs:

"The Amnesty Proclamation of May 29, 1865, giving the country and the world the assurance that the victory of the Union would not be tarnished by any acts of bloody vengeance, was received with general satisfaction at the North, excepting by a few extremists. But the proclamation ordering the reconstruction of the State of North Carolina, which appeared on the same day, caused much misgiving, as it was taken not as a mere experiment, but as an intended rule for the reconstruction of all the rest. It confirmed the right of suffrage to the white men. Among the white men of the South there were only a small number who had not, after the secession ordinances had been passed, thrown in their lot with the rebellion. These comparatively few consistent loyalists did not, as a rule, belong to the influential class. And among these few there were still fewer convinced anti-slavery men. It was, therefore, certain that a large majority of the voting body in the Southern States so to be reconstructed would consist of men who had taken part in the rebellion and then qualified themselves as voters by taking the oath of allegiance, and that this large majority would stand under the immediate influence of the class of men who had instigated the attempt to break up the Union for the purpose of founding 'an empire on the corner-stone of slavery.' Nor was it unreasonable to expect that this class of men, if directly or indirectly entrusted with power, would indeed accept the abolition of slavery in point of form, but would spare no effort to preserve as much as possible of its substance.

"Availing myself again of the privilege President Johnson had granted to me, I wrote to him about the anxieties among many of his friends caused by the position he had taken in his North Carolina proclamation, and in reply I received from him a telegraphic message asking me to call upon him at the White House at my earliest convenience. I obeyed his summons without delay.

"On the way to Washington something strange happened to me which may be of interest to the speculative psychologist. I went from Bethlehem to Philadelphia in the afternoon with the intention of taking there the midnight train to Washington. At Philadelphia I took supper at the house of my intimate friend, Dr. Tiedemann, the son of the eminent professor of medicine at the University of Heidelberg, and brother of the Colonel Tiedemann, one of whose aides-de-camp I had been during



the siege of the Fortress of Rastatt in 1849. Mrs. Tiedemann was a sister of Friedrich Hecker, the famous revolutionary leader in Germany, who in this country did distinguished service as a Union officer. The Tiedemanns had lost two sons in our army, one in Kansas and the other, a darling boy, in the Shenandoah Valley. The mother, a lady of bright mind and a lively imagination, happened to become acquainted with a circle of spiritualists and received 'messages' from her two sons, which were of the ordinary sort, but moved her so much that she became a believer. The doctor, too, although belonging to a school of philosophy which looked down upon such things with a certain disdain, could not restrain a sentimental interest in the pretended communications from his lost boys, and permitted spiritualistic experiments to be made in his family. This was done with much zest. On the evening I speak of, it was resolved to have a seance. One of the daughters, an uncommonly beautiful, intelligent and high-spirited girl of about fifteen, had shown remarkable qualities as a 'writing medium.' When the circle was formed around the table, hands touching, a shiver seemed to pass over her, her fingers began to twitch, she grasped a pencil held out to her, and as if obeying an irresistible impulse, she wrote in a jerky way upon a piece of paper placed before her the 'messages' given her by the 'spirits' that happened to be present. So it happened that evening. The names of various deceased persons known to the family were announced, but they had nothing to say except that they 'lived in a higher sphere,' and were 'happy,' and 'were often with us,' and 'wished us all to be happy,' etc.

"Finally I was asked by one of the family would I not take part in the proceeding by calling for some spirit in whom I took an interest? I consented and called for the spirit of Schiller. For a minute or two the hand of the girl remained quiet. Then she wrote that the spirit of Schiller had come and asked what I wished of him. I answered that I wished him by way of identification to quote a verse or two from one of his works. Then the girl wrote in German the following:

'Ich höre rauschende Musik. Das Schloss ist  
Von Lichtern hell. Wer sind die Fröhlichen?'

'Gay music strikes my ear. The castle is  
Aglow with lights. Who are the revelers?'

"We were all struck with astonishment. The sound of the language was much like Schiller's. But none of us remembered for a moment in which of Schiller's works the lines might be found. At last it occurred to me that they might be in the last act of 'Wallenstein's Tod.' The volume was brought out, and true enough, there they were. I asked myself 'can it be that this girl who, although very bright, has never been

given to much reading, should have read so serious a work as "Wallenstein's Death," and if she has, that those verses, which have meaning only in connection with what precedes and follows them, should have stuck in her memory?' I asked her when the seance was over what she knew about the Wallenstein tragedy, and she, an entirely truthful child, answered that she had never read a line of it.

"But something still stranger was in store for me. Schiller's spirit would say no more, and I called for the spirit of Abraham Lincoln. Several minutes had elapsed when the girl wrote that Abraham Lincoln's spirit was present. I asked whether he knew for what purpose President Johnson had summoned me to Washington. The answer came: 'He wants you to make an important journey for him.' I asked where that journey would take me. Answer: 'He will tell you tomorrow.' I asked further whether I should undertake that journey. Answer: 'Yes, do not fail.' (I may add, by the way, that at the time I had myself not the slightest anticipation as to what President Johnson's intention with regard to me was. The most plausible supposition I entertained was that he wished to discuss with me the points urged in my letters.)

"Having disposed of this matter I asked whether the spirit of Lincoln had anything more to say to me. The answer came: 'Yes, you will be a Senator of the United States.' This struck me as so fanciful that I could hardly suppress a laugh. But I asked further: 'From what state?' Answer: 'From Missouri.' This was more provokingly mysterious still; but there the conversation ended. Hardly anything could have been more improbable at that time than that I should be a Senator of the United States from the State of Missouri. My domicile was in Wisconsin, and I was then thinking of returning there. I had never thought of removing from Wisconsin to Missouri, and there was not the slightest prospect of my ever doing so. But—to forestall my narrative—two years later I was surprised by an entirely unsought and unexpected business proposition which took me to St. Louis, and in January, 1869, the Legislature of Missouri elected me a Senator of the United States. I then remembered the prophecy made to me at the spirit seance in the house of my friend Tiedemann in Philadelphia, which during the intervening years had never been thought of. I should hardly have trusted my memory with regard to it, had it not been verified by friends who witnessed the occurrence."

Here we have the Honorable Carl Schurz, ex-senator and one time Minister of the Interior, soldier, patriot, and one of the most level-headed American statesmen, a profound philosopher and student, a man of the highest ideals and irreproachable integrity, relating fearlessly his psychical experiences as convincing as irrefutable. Dr. Hyslop was evidently pleased by my recalling to his mind the incidents which it seems he had forgotten, for I have since learned that they had been inserted in the



*Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research*, Vol. VI, pp. 464-466.

The subject of our conversation then turned on the medical profession and its attitude toward psychical research and spiritual phenomena in general. I know that he was surprised that I, who had been engaged for more than a quarter of a century in the study of and effort to combat such a realistic disease as tuberculosis, which has not only a medical but also a very great economic, social and truly worldly aspect, should be interested in such subjects as psychism, spiritism, etc. He had incidentally remarked that in his experience the medical profession was antagonistic to all such studies and as a rule very materialistically inclined. Dr. Hyslop evidently belonged to that large number of people already hinted at who think that the study of medicine renders the student antagonistic to anything beyond what is known as physical science.

He asked me how I had become interested in the subject and what I thought or knew of the general attitude of medical men toward it at the present day. I had to reply that I feared that it would take too long to relate individual experiences and to discuss the attitude of the medical profession as I know it to be from my associations with many of the members, but that I hoped some day, after his complete restoration to health, to have an opportunity to continue the most interesting conversation which had begun during that delightful summer afternoon. I thought I noticed the symptoms of an extreme fatigue coming over Dr. Hyslop and did not feel justified to prolong my visit.

Now he has passed on and I shall not have the privilege to discuss these interesting themes with him until I, too, shall have reached the other shore. But in honor of his memory and as a tribute to him, I feel a sort of moral obligation to make a brief statement on the subject which I had promised to make at our next meeting, particularly regarding the attitude of the medical profession toward it and, therefore, I am grateful for the invitation to be a contributor to this memorial number. In the preceding sentence wherein I express the hope of meeting him again, I have already declared my conviction of the continuation of life as a personal entity after the change we call death. I furthermore feel that I owe it to my departed friend to acknowledge publicly that I have passed through the various mental and religious attitudes of materialism, agnosticism, and skepticism toward all things spiritual, until irrefutable evidences came to me which made me not a believer, but one who feels that he knows.

When Dr. Hyslop thought with so many others that medicine was only a material science and most physicians materialists, he was perhaps right in a measure. The medical student sometimes prides himself on his materialism, or at least agnosticism, and this attitude he often carries with him when he enters medical practice. But what the raw student

or even the young graduate in medicine thinks, for he already knows, or thinks he knows, more than his gray-haired masters and teachers, is rarely true of the maturer minds in the medical profession, at least not among American physicians. Whether one is a general practitioner or a specialist, as years go by he will see that man is not merely composed of matter, but that to speak in theological language, there is a physical body and there is a spiritual body. It will not take the young doctor many years of practice before he will learn that there is not only a physical suffering, but also a soul suffering, and he will never be a great physician unless he can minister to the sufferings of that invisible and spiritual counterpart as well as that of the physical man.

If the physician branches out into the study of psychology and makes the treatment of diseases of the mind and nervous system a specialty, he will be confronted with problems which he cannot solve by attending to the physical condition of the patient alone. As the specialist for this class of diseases becomes more and more thorough in seeking the causes for many mental derangements, he will meet conditions which make him admit that there are surely invisible forces around us, whether called spirits or something else, which exist and must be dealt with. I refer here particularly to the cases of what are known as double or even triple personalities. In spite of the fact that some authors of essays on nervous diseases try to explain double personalities on the basis of physical derangements, autopsies on such persons have, to the best of my knowledge, never revealed any physical changes in the brain cells which could account for the phenomena observed in double or multiple personalities. Though in everyday life and under ordinary conditions a co-relation of mind and brain exists, it by no means proves their identity.

Before leaving the subject of double or triple personalities, or of the possible manifestation of mind without brain substance, may we not ask the question: Are the wondrous intellectual powers in mathematics, chess, music or other sciences and arts, which we find in some instances permanently and others temporarily manifested in our child prodigies, to be explained away by calling them freaks? Should we not accept the more rational explanation that the brain of the child is controlled by an outside entity, that is to say, a discarnate spirit which had attained in its earthly career particular efficiency in the subject which makes the child a prodigy? An uneducated medium has been known in a trance state to discuss the highest philosophical subjects. This, too, can only be explained by a higher intelligence taking possession of the medium as an instrument in the same manner as an otherwise perfectly normal child can defeat in chess tournaments half a dozen or more of the greatest gray-haired experts.

To relate here the psychical experiences which I had in mind to discuss with Dr. Hyslop would be futile. I have always maintained that



in psychical phenomena what is irrefutable evidence to one may not at all be such to another. Each individual should find out for himself and while he may seriously consider the testimonies of others, such as are given in the books of Lodge, Hyslop, Stead, Hill, Doyle, and others, and in the publications of the two Societies for Psychical Research, he should not rely on them exclusively. As a result of my studies and experiences I desire to say, however, that the investigator of such phenomena must divest himself of all prejudice, must have an open mind, must seek diligently and above all unselfishly after truth. He must approach the subject with profound reverence, deep earnestness, and with an ardent desire to be of service. The psychical investigator who thinks that the result of his researches will lessen his obligations and responsibilities toward the material world is seriously mistaken. On the contrary, if he has the aptitudes essential to an unbiased truth seeking investigator, the result of his researches will lead him on to a higher conception of the meaning of the words duty and service.

If one should fail to receive satisfactory evidence after having spent some time in patient inquiry and investigation he should not despair, nor should he revolt and pronounce the whole theory of spirit communication a fallacy. Let him try again and again with patience and reverence and also bear in mind that not all can be mediums and that apparently trivial communications may be of great import and necessary to reveal the identity of the discarnate spirit. Again, there are good and less good mediums, or to express it in other words, some mediums are very sensitive and others less so to the thought picture given to them and which the brain of the medium must translate into words. It must also be remembered that it is best for some minds to suspend investigations until they feel the equilibrium of physical and mental forces needed for psychical studies. In the meantime let them have faith in God and immortality, and concerning the validity of inexplicable or bewildering psychical phenomena, rather suspend judgment than make a hasty rejection.

Against the usual assumption that physicians care little for the spirit, that nearly all of them are skeptical toward such matters as psychical research, and allied subjects, and that many do not even believe in the immortality of the soul, I wish to protest. Occasionally, even in the medical press there appears a discussion of the attitude of physicians toward spiritual phenomena. In the *Journal of the American Medical Association* of March 27, 1920, for example, there appeared a lengthy editorial under the title "Spirits and the Medical Mind." Expressing astonishment that men like Sir Oliver Lodge and particularly Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, a former medical practitioner, "should be caught in the web" of spiritualistic belief, the writer goes on to say: "Education is the vaccination that confers immunity; but it does not always take. We are then properly amazed that a mind of superior training, especially in scientific discipline, should

subscribe to beliefs on evidence that it is difficult to conceive as convincing to any but a prejudiced will to believe." To this Dr. James Johnston, of Bradford, Pa., replies at length in a subsequent number of the same periodical (May 8). He says:

"A mind adjusted to set up an adequate resistance in advance is not an open and a judicial mind, and it would be more in keeping with the dignity of the American Medical Association to make 'a patient analysis of the evidence to see what it really shows.' There are physicians to whom medicine means more than the daily, diagnostic thought-habits of practicing specialists; who keep in touch with the progress of the world in all lines; who enjoy the large view of the present day, and hope that the darkness that limits human understanding may be pushed back for another gain in their generation..... All will agree that the world grows. And the American Medical Association grows. Let it not hide now from 'unrecognized forces.' I beg to propose a Committee of Psychical Research as an addition to the active departments of this Association. It might have a perfectly legitimate and fairly permanent occupation in the exposing of frauds. Then, perhaps, it might start a card index for communications—no sources barred—and assist the British, on the firing line again, in the newest phase of the oldest campaign in which mankind has ever engaged."

And what kind of a man is this Arthur Conan Doyle to whom the editorial of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* refers sarcastically as having been "caught in the web of spiritualistic belief"?

The *New York Medical Journal*, one of the most important medical periodicals of the country, in its issue of August 14, pays the "Author-physician," Dr. Conan Doyle, a fine tribute as a sane and splendid type of manhood. The editorial states that in recent years Dr. Doyle had become greatly interested in occult science and that he is one of the staunchest defenders of the theory of spiritism. Yet, the distinguished editor of the *New York Medical Journal* frankly says: "In all Dr. Doyle's stories there is a masculine, healthful and courageous spirit. His pages are stimulating from first to last. He sees life as a whole, and his outlook is broad and genial. His is a sane philosophy of life, and one does not have to be a good guesser to size him up for a man of action, an outdoor man, a devotee to all outdoor sports, who has been whaling in the Arctic seas, has made balloon and airplane flights, has been skiing in the Swiss Alps, and is a crack rifle shot and an inveterate golfer..... As a writer, Dr. Doyle has firmly established himself in English literature. Few writers have been more versatile than he..... Dr. Doyle is also a poet and historian. Two volumes of poems—*Songs of Action* and *Songs of the Road*—stand to his credit, and in the field of history he gave us two volumes of the Boer War and was Britain's official historian of the British campaigns in France and Flanders during the World War.



The British Government gave him sole access to official records and other sources, from which he compiled the six volumes which tell of the British's Army's part in the struggle against Germany....." Besides all this he devoted thirty years of his life to the most painstaking study of psychical phenomena and only now does he venture to publish the result of his investigations. Conan Doyle entered upon this work, as many young medical men, a "convinced materialist as regards our personal destiny" and one who had considered the subject of spiritual phenomena as "the greatest nonsense upon earth." Yet, I venture to say that his book, "The New Revelation" (Geo. H. Doran, N. Y., Publishers), is one of the most remarkable and convincing documents ever issued on the subject of spirit phenomena and its religious interpretation.

The careful study of this little volume is recommended to the atheist and the scoffer at religion as well as to the believer in Heaven and Hell, to the believer in Nirvana, to those of average intelligence, and to the most learned. The book will satisfy most of the yearning souls concerning the true life hereafter and give hope for a better world both here and there.

In contrast to the attitude expressed in the editorial in the *Journal of the A. M. A.* of March 27, 1920, it is refreshing to read an editorial reply in the July number of *American Medicine* to Dr. J. Danforth Taylor's attack on spiritism, mediums, psychic phenomena, etc., which appeared in the *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal* of June 10, 1920, entitled "Psychical Research and the Physician." The editor of *American Medicine* devotes three columns to refuting Dr. Taylor's accusations and says among other things: "The studies of Hyslop, the literature of Sir Oliver Lodge, the popularity of the Ouija Board and the growth of numerous cults are indicative of a psychical unrest which has rapidly grown from mere interest in discarnate forms to a general impulsive seeking for communication with the dead. An appreciation of the psychology permitting the rapid growth of spiritism is of less consequence than a determination of the attitude to be held by the physicians on the subject of psychical research.

"In the *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*, June 10, 1920, Dr. J. Danforth Taylor discusses this subject with a frank assumption that 'medical men should realize the import of such influences and use their utmost power to combat such theories.' From his point of view, a physician, by virtue of his scientific training, is expected 'to protect his business, his own peculiar method of specialized industry, by which his intellectual labor obtains its pecuniary reward.' If this statement be correct, medicine is immediately relegated to commercialism. If the sole interest of physicians is the development of the financial aspects of their profession, irrespective of other great truths which may be developing, it scarcely merits the approval of intelligent persons who see in science a

means to greater human happiness regardless of financial considerations.

"The attitude of Dr. Taylor is in itself thoroughly unscientific because it fails to recognize the great unexplored fields which pioneers are seeking to penetrate and which contain, undoubtedly, many elements that are to contribute to human welfare. His inability to grasp the potency of religion makes him a poor judge of the point of view which medical men should possess toward the realm of metaphysics, theology, and religion. This is evident in the following quotation: 'Just as priests and parsons are the mediators of a god and mankind and develop a powerful organization for personal profit from the believers, so the medium acts as the middleman between the spirit and the message seeker.'

"Dr. Taylor is absolutely correct in demanding that the same methods of investigation should be applied in studying the unknown that are utilized in studying the known. But that science thus far has not demonstrated any dualistic nature of man is no reason to believe that it may not be demonstrated in the future. The scientific attitude deserves support, but in making themselves 'defenders of science' medical men do not assume an attitude of opposition to investigation hitherto localized in the world of faith.

"The blindness of the profession to kernels of truth, around which have built up large movements and cults, has been responsible for many of the accusations of conservatism, narrow-mindedness and professional jealousy which have undermined to some extent its reputation for liberal thinking, progressiveness and scientific attitudes.....

"The attitude of the medical profession should indeed be scientific, but it must not be bereft of faith. Open-mindedness is a far greater advantage to human welfare than opposition to things that are unknown on the grounds that they are unscientific and tend to 'impede progress, impair the mind of man, and subjugate his mentality to a parasitic class.' It is not a truly scientific attitude to assume alleged spiritualistic phenomena as 'bunk or fake.' Psychology and psychiatry may give a natural explanation of some of the unexplained spiritual phenomena, but only in their superficial elements."

When I procured Dr. Taylor's article in the *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal* and read it for myself, one paragraph deserving refutation seemed to me to have been overlooked by the distinguished editorial writer in *American Medicine*. In discussing the Buddhistic belief in the transmigration of souls, Dr. Taylor makes the following statement: "In another direction this leads to the belief of the incarnation of a Deity in human form, a belief found in many religions. A Hebrew peasant, called Jesus the Christ, was an example, a believer in spirits and demons." There is no scriptural evidence that Jesus in his true utterances ever considered himself the Deity incarnated. He said: "I and My Father are one." To attain oneness with God is the aspiration of all



intelligent believers in a supreme being. As to Christ's belief in spirits and demons, it can only be said that the belief in spirits, good and evil, has been inherent in humanity ever since man became an intelligent being. In the case of Christ, it is not unlikely that when He is referred to as casting out devils, He was in the presence of what is now known as a double or a multiple personality and treated the case by suggestion or hypnotism, the methods which are used by every up-to-date psychiatrist when in the presence of such cases.

Scientifically trained investigators have demonstrated that the spirit of man lives after his so-called death, and since there are good, bad, and mischievous men, and since the passing of man into the beyond does not produce a sudden change in the qualities of the heart, mind, or intellect which he takes with him, it is evident that since there are good, bad, and mischievous men, there must be good, bad, and mischievous spirits. The latter may be often responsible for the silly, ridiculous, and unreliable messages sometimes received from the other side. Even so great an antagonist to modern spiritism as Dr. A. T. Schofield admits this and yet he devotes a whole volume entitled "Modern Spiritism, Its Science and Religion" (P. Blakiston's Son & Co., Phila.), to attacking the entire subject of spirit communication and spiritual advancement in the other world. But fortunately innumerable evidences, such as related in various well-accredited books,\* show that there is, yonder, opportunity for work, progress, and improvement.

That the majority of physicians do not believe in the immortality of the soul is not true, at least I believe not of American physicians. Not even the priest or spiritual adviser of any religion can have witnessed as many death scenes as fall to the lot of the average physician. It is indeed difficult to explain except by the spiritualistic theory how as happens so often that a perfectly sound mind in a dying body expresses the most beautiful sentiments of love and devotion for those he leaves behind. What has become of that wonderful intelligence that could express such divine thoughts? The witnessing of such scenes at the bedside of dying patients has converted many a physician not only to the belief in the individual immortality of the soul, but also to the belief of the divine in man.

In all these many years of association with medical men throughout our great country, I have found but few who have dared to say, "Death ends all." On the other hand, I have met many who have expressed to me personally their belief in, or rather their conviction of, the continuity of individual life, and who even dared to put it in their writings.

---

\*Sir Oliver Lodge, "The Survival of Man." Samuel McComb, "The Future Life in the Light of Modern Inquiry." William Stainton Moses, "Spirit Teachings." James H. Hyslop, "Life After Death." Hill J. Arthur, "Man is a Spirit." Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, "The Vital Message."

Only recently, one of our most distinguished surgeons, Major W. W. Keen, M. D., LL. D., Emeritus Professor of Surgery, Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia, Pa., honored me by sending me his work on "Seven Decades in Medicine," in which he describes the progress medicine and surgery have made in 72 years, from 1846—the time of the discovery of surgical anesthesia by William T. G. Morton—to 1918. Dr. Keen makes the statement that more progress has been made in these 72 years than in as many centuries before, and then concludes by saying: "I am also quite willing to believe that the next seventy years will be as fruitful as the last seventy have been. My only regret is that I shall not be here to witness the progress. Yet I ought not to say that, for I believe as firmly in my future existence, and with powers far superior to the limited powers that are given us here, as I do in my present existence. I believe that I shall know what is going on in this great though little world."

The greatest physician of the Anglo-Saxon race, Sir William Osler, Bart. Regius Professor of Medicine, Oxford, recognized authority on internal medicine throughout the civilized world, who only recently passed to the great beyond, was during his lifetime considered an honest agnostic by many of his admirers. In his address on "Science and Immortality" at Harvard University in 1904, we read "Rather be mistaken with Plato than be in the right with those who deny altogether life after death, and this is my own *confessio fidei*." And among his effects the following note was found which he had penned a few days before his death:

"Dear Friends, the harbor is nearly reached, after a splendid voyage with such companions all the way; and my boy waiting for me."

His son, Lieutenant Revere Osler, had made the supreme sacrifice in the World War; Sir William was sure to meet him. He was convinced that physical death would not end his conscious individual existence, and I have known and know of many medical brethren who are even convinced that intelligent communication between those who have passed on and those still in the flesh is in the range of possibility.

One of the greatest minds of all ages, William Shakespeare, the poet and seer, knew what he was talking about when he put into the mouth of Hamlet the immortal words, "There are more things in Heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy." This exhortation is often as applicable today as then.

Camille Flammarion, the great French astronomer, with a prophetic vision concerning unexplained psychic phenomena, says: "La connaissance de l'âme humaine, comme entité psychique et physique, sera la science de demain." ("The understanding of the soul of man as a psychic and physical entity will be the science of tomorrow.") My friend, Hyslop, may rest assured that this tomorrow is near. The French Academy



of Sciences has just awarded a prize to L. Chevreuil for his book entitled "On ne meurt pas—Preuves scientifiques de la Survie," from which the just quoted saying of Flammarion has been taken. The book has already been translated into English by Agnes Kendrick Gray and is published by E. P. Dutton & Co., New York, under the title "Proofs of the Spirit World."

I have written these reminiscences of James Hervey Hyslop in affectionate and grateful remembrance of him, as a friend, teacher, seer, and prophet, and for the purpose of letting the world know what some medical minds think of the science to which he devoted his high intelligence and the best years of his life. In years to come, his studies in psychical research, his proof of the world of continuity of individual existence, and the scientific evidence of possible communication between the so-called dead and living, will rank with the greatest achievements of the age. His name will be gratefully remembered and blessed by millions when those of the so-called "scientific" scoffers and detractors of psychic phenomena and spiritism will be forgotten.

In conclusion how can I do better, in honor of the memory of Dr. Hyslop, than to declare my own *confessio fidei* after the example of my great teacher, Sir William Osler?

After weighing all the evidence, the result of my studies has convinced me that there are genuine manifestations coming from discarnate intelligences, revealing what I may reverently call Divine Truth. In order that I may express what the result these many years of studies has brought to me, I would wish to use the words of Gerald Massey, feeling that this poet and thinker expressed it better than I possibly could, when he answered the query as to what this new and yet so old religion had done for him: "Spiritualism has been for me, in common with many others, such a lifting of the mental horizon and letting in of the heavens—such a formation of faith into facts, that I can only compare life without it to sailing on board ship with hatches battened down and being kept a prisoner, living by the light of the candle, on some splendid starry night, allowed to go on deck for the first time to see the stupendous mechanism of the heavens all aglow with the glory of God."













